The permissible levels of exposure in the work environment in respect of asbestos, silica dust, cotton dust, lead, manganese and other toxic chemicals etc. have been laid down under the Factories Act, 1948. The industries which handle asbestos, Silica (glass and ceramic etc.), coal, lead and its compound, non-ferrous metallurgical industries, insecricides and pesticides etc. have been included in the list of industries involving hazardous processes under the Factories Act, 1948. A new chapter for regulating safety and health aspects in the hazardous process industries has been incorporated in the above Act in the year 1987. The provisions of the Act are required to be complied with by the 'Occupier' of the Factory and enforced by the respective State Governments' Union Territory administrations.

Misappropriation of Povident Fund Accumulations

@2416. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the increasing incidence of mis-appropriation of Provident Fund accumulations by the corporate sector both, private and public and if so, the names of the companies and the sums defalcated by each during the last three years; and

(b) what steps are being taken to protest the interests of the affected workers and their families?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House in due course.

Functioning of regional officers of provident fund commissioners

2417. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the various Regional Offices of Provident Fund Commissioners are functioning in a very inefficient way;

(b) if so, what steps are being taken to modernise and streamline the functioning of the Regional Offices of Provident Fund Commissioners; and

(c) what is the number of cases pending with Regional Office of Provident Fund Commissioner in Hyderabad?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) and (b) The functioning of the Regional Provident Fund Commissioners is generally satisfactory. However, in order to provide prompt service to the E.P.F. subscribers and streamlining the accounting procedure, a massive computerisation programme has been launched in the EPF Organisation. A central action plan covering substantial areas of work has also been initiated for improving the system's efficiency and effectiveness.

(c) As on 31.12.1992 as against 41547 cases received relating to final settlement, 902 cases were pending.

राष्ट्रीय ग्रामीण श्रम आयोग को मान्यता दिया जाना

2418. **श्री राम नरेश यादव** : क्या श्रम मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या सरकार राष्ट्रीय ग्रामीण श्रम आयोग को पूर्णतया और स्थायी

@ Previousy Unstarred Question 1602 transferred from 9th March, 1993.